

United States District Court

for the

Southern District of Texas

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)

V.)

Rafael Santiago ARANO-Rodriguez) Case Number:

Veracruz, Mexico)

)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of September 25, 2018 in the county of Webb in the
(Date)
Southern District of Texas, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

Title 8 United States Code, Section
1324

Offense Description

Did unlawfully transport, attempt to transport, and conspire to transport Guatemalan nationals Miguel AJQUI-Suy, Miguel ROQUEL-Lopez, and six (6) other undocumented aliens by means of motor vehicle within the Southern District of Texas, knowing or in reckless disregard of the fact that said aliens had come to, entered, or remained in the United States in violation of law, and transported or moved or attempted to transport or move said aliens within the United States by means of transportation or otherwise in furtherance of such violation of law.

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See attachment "A".

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

/s/ Juan DeArcos

Complainant's Signature

Juan DeArcos

Printed Name and Title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence,

Date: September 27, 2018

Judge's Signature

City and State: Laredo, Texas

Sam Sheldon , U.S. Magistrate Judge

Printed Name and Title

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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V.

Rafael Santiago ARANO-Rodriguez

[CONT OF BASIS OF COMPLAINT]

On September 25, 2018, an off-duty Zapata County Sherriff Deputy, was traveling southbound on U.S. Highway 83 toward Zapata, Texas in his personally owned vehicle when he observed a truck stationary on the northbound lane. The Deputy saw approximately fifteen (15) people running to the truck from the brush and loading into the truck. The Deputy also saw the driver of the truck. The Deputy immediately contacted Border Patrol Agent (BPA) Ramirez, via cell phone, who was on duty working the Zapata, Texas (TX) area. The Deputy informed BPA Ramirez of the description of the vehicle and what he had witnessed. As the Deputy continued communicating with BPA Ramirez, he continued traveling southbound and turned back at the nearest U-turn in order to follow the truck. The Deputy caught up to the truck and relayed the license plate information to BPA Ramirez who, in turn, relayed the information via service radio to other BPAs working in Zapata, TX.

BPAs Ruben Perales and Abraham Ponce, who were working the Zapata, TX area together, responded to the report and observed the truck and the Deputy's vehicle pass their location on Highway 83 going northbound. As the truck passed their location, BPA Perales observed several people in the back seat of the truck. When BPAs Perales and Ponce caught up to the truck, BPA Perales did not see people in the back seat as previously seen. BPAs Perales and Ponce activated their emergency equipment, however the truck failed to yield, and a pursuit ensued. The Deputy continued traveling northbound as BPAs pursued the truck.

BPA Perales notified other BPAs via service radio of the pursuit and allowed a marked Border Patrol sedan to take over the pursuit. Shortly thereafter, a Controlled Tire Deflation Device was deployed causing the vehicle to stop. The driver, identified as Mexican National Rafael ARANO-Rodriguez, attempted to run from the truck and was taken into custody by BPAs with the assistance of the Deputy. Eight (8) illegal aliens (IAs) were also apprehended from the truck. ARANO-Rodriguez and the eight (8) IAs were transported to the Laredo South Border Patrol station for processing.

Homeland Security Investigation (HSI) Laredo agents were notified of the human smuggling attempt and responded to the Laredo South Border Patrol station to interview all subjects involved. ARANO-Rodriguez was read his Miranda Rights in the English language, acknowledged his rights and agreed to provide a statement without the presence of an attorney.

ARANO-Rodriguez stated an acquaintance contacted him via cell phone on September 25, 2018 at approximately 1:30 p.m. and offered to pay him two hundred-fifty (\$250.00) United States Dollars (USD) to pick up approximately eight (8) to ten (10) IAs who were waiting in the brush near a creek by La Perla Ranch located on U.S. Highway 83. ARANO-Rodriguez agreed and stopped at a predetermined area where eight (8) IAs got into the truck. ARANO-Rodriguez was going to transport the eight (8) IAs to an unknown house but was stopped by Border Patrol Agents.

HSI Laredo agents interviewed Guatemalan nationals, Miguel AJQUI-Suy and Miguel ROQUEL-Lopez who were held as material witnesses against ARANO-Rodriguez. The material witnesses stated they paid an unknown smuggler in Mexico two thousand (2,000.00) Mexican Pesos to be smuggled into the United States and were to pay an additional unknown amount to be transported to Houston, TX. AJQUI-Suy identified ARANO-Rodriguez from a six-person (6) photo array as the driver of the truck in which they were being transported prior to being apprehended by Border Patrol.

ARANO-Rodriguez will be charged with violations of Title 8 United States Code 1324, Alien Smuggling and will be held at the Webb County Jail pending initial appearance before a Magistrate Judge of the Southern District of Texas on September 27, 2018.

[END]